



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
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## **WOLFFIA COLUMBIANA** **COLUMBIA WATER-MEAL**

Columbia Water-meal is a minute, floating aquatic perennial, among the world's smallest flowering plants. The plant body is rootless and without distinction between stem and leaf. Plants are symmetrical, semispherical, uniformly green, less than 1.5 mm long, smooth and rounded on the back, and floating just below the surface of the water. The plants rarely flower, reproducing vegetatively by budding, and overwintering in minute bulblike structures that drop to the bottom. Rarely if ever observed flowering; vegetative material observed July-September.

Species of *WOLFFIA* are distinguished from other genera of small floating aquatics in the duckweed family, including *LEMNA*, *SPIRODELLA*, and *WOLFFIELLA*, by their small size less than 1.5 mm long, and by being both rootless and with 3-dimensional shape. *WOLFFIA COLUMBIANA* is distinguished from *W. PUNCTATA* by its rounded, smooth upper surface rather than being flattened on top and/or with sunken brown dots.